

Home videoconferencing can transform therapy for anxiety disorders

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Many professionals don't know how to deliver highly effective, non-medication treatment and patients often don't have access to high-quality treatment. Two Drexel professors now have a solution to this urgent medical need.

The National Institute of [Mental Health](#) estimates that one in four Americans suffer from an [anxiety](#) disorder, and of those more than 2.2 million people with anxiety disorders have obsessive compulsive disorder. OCD, an extremely debilitating anxiety disorder, is responsible for roughly 8.4 billion dollars per year in social and economic losses in the United States. Many professionals don't know how to deliver highly effective, non-medication treatment and patients often don't have access to high-quality treatment to address their needs. Two Drexel professors now have a solution to this urgent medical need.

According Dr. James Herbert and Dr. Evan Forman, psychology professors and directors of Drexel's Anxiety Treatment and Research Program, [videoconferencing](#) technologies can help make treatment available to people who might not otherwise have access to psychological help.

To study the effectiveness and feasibility of videoconferencing treatment as a user-friendly and low-cost option for people seeking psychological counseling, Herbert, Forman and Drexel doctoral student Elizabeth Goetter have designed a program that treats individuals with OCD through Skype. According to the Drexel researchers, programs like

Skype have the ability to revolutionize how therapy is provided, particularly in cases in which individuals need highly specialized mental health treatment, as is the case with OCD.

With the rapidly evolving nature of technology and videoconferencing, it is becoming increasingly viable for individuals with mental health concerns to see their therapist in a videoconference environment, reducing or eliminating the need to drive to a therapist's office, according to the Drexel researchers. They are finding that these methods are not only more convenient and more cost-effective, but also make high quality mental health care services more widely available to people, regardless of geographical location.

Provided by Drexel University

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